

# NEW YORK TIMES

9 JAN 1976

## C.I.A. Seeking to Find Out Who Told About Italian Aid

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8—The Ford Administration and the Central Intelligence Agency are trying informally to find out who leaked the information that the United States planned to funnel money to Italian political parties, according to sources familiar with the events.

The sources stressed that there was no intention to use the Federal Bureau of Investigation or other agencies to make inquiries.

"I think the President and a lot of others would just like to know how these things get out," one of the sources said. As a result, he said, the Administration is back-tracking to pinpoint when the information was made available to Congress, and when it appeared in the press.

### Accounts and Denial

On Dec. 26, The Sacramento Bee and the other members of California's McClatchy newspaper chain printed a dispatch from that organization's Washington bureau that said the United States had authorized funds for Italian parties. The Bee mentioned the matter again on Jan. 6.

Yesterday, The New York Times and The Washington Post carried accounts quoting informed sources as saying that \$6 million had been funneled to anti-Communist political leaders in Italy by the C.I.A. since Dec. 8.

William E. Colby, the Central Intelligence Director, said today: "We have not spent a nickel in Italy in the past few months, to be specific about it. We have not done so." However Mr. Colby, who made the statement during an appearance on the NBC-TV program "Today," declined to discuss "what our plans, what our thoughts might be for the future."

His account appeared to contradict press reports indicating that the money had already been paid to Italian political figures. One suggested explanation was that though the payments were authorized by the President on Dec. 8, they may not have actually been made in following weeks.

### The 'How' Is Held Vital

Sources on Capitol Hill and in the Presidency believe that the question of how the story was leaked may be more important than the question of whether the United States was im-

properly intruding into the Italian electoral process.

"The story appeared at the very moment that the Congress is trying to hammer out proposals which would formalize its being able to receive intelligence data," an Administration source said. "If the story leaked out of a Congressional committee, that doesn't speak very well for Congress getting highly secret information on a regular basis."

The search for the source of the leak seemed to be entirely a matter of officials asking questions in the halls of Congress and among the agencies familiar with the events.

### Colby Chides Congress

Mr. Colby used the "Today" show platform to criticize Congressional responsibility on the matter of secrecy. "Now we have a new law passed last December which requires us to report to six committees," he said. "Almost everything that's been reported to those six committees has been exposed in the press."

"I see in a quotation in the press yesterday that two members of Congress confirmed, by telephone, that I had given them a briefing on some secret activity."

"Now this is not a way to protect secrets, particularly when some of the activities that we conduct we conduct with the approval and even, in one situation, the urging of one of the committees of the Congress to conduct a particular activity."

Representative Wayne L. Hays, Democrat of Ohio, and Senator Claiborne Pell, Democrat of Rhode Island, confirmed in an interview with The Associated Press that they knew about the Italian operation, and Mr. Hayes confirmed that it was Mr. Colby who had briefed him.

Neither the Senate nor the House committee investigating the intelligence community was told about the Italian operation.

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